

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Miss. Baptists canvass Sturgis rally

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Every year in mid-August, the tiny town of Sturgis in Oktibbeha County plays host to one of the largest motorcycle rallies in the country — and Mississippi Baptists are there, augmenting the efforts of local churches and Golden Triangle Association to reach the lost for Jesus.

"Sturgis South," named after the grandfather of motorcycle rallies held each year in Sturgis, S.D., drew more than 25,000 registrants this year, but families, friends, and gawkers easily pushed the total attendance to over 40,000. The town of Sturgis — population 260 — turns into a virtual beehive of activity with thousands of motorcycles entering and leaving town at any given time.

Sturgis Church, located in downtown Sturgis, is at the epicenter of the rally. "The church has been involved in ministry during this rally for several years," said Sturgis Church Pastor Russell Mord. "We started handing out free water and tracts to the bikers who were coming into town. Last year, we really got some help when Mississippi Baptists sponsored a motorcycle stunt show in our back parking lot, and we had the opportunity to witness to people. We saw 13 people come to Christ."

Mord said that for this year's rally, Mississippi Baptists brought in Team Impact, a strongman crew composed of about 20 Christian athletes who travel the globe to spread the Gospel and witness for Christ through their physical abilities, and also sent cases of special Bikers' Bibles to be handed out.

For the Sturgis rally, Team Impact selected Barry Haynes of Vicksburg, Hunter Grimes of Walker, La., and Trey Talley of Dallas. "We use our feats of strength to draw the crowds in, to let them see these crazy things, and the reason why we do these crazy things is so we can share the Good News of Jesus Christ," Grimes said.

Those "crazy things" include snapping baseball bats like toothpicks, squeezing soft drink cans until they explode, breaking stacks of flaming bricks with their forearms, tearing 2000-page telephone books in half, and breaking more bricks with their heads.

Talley, a bodybuilder and former youth minister, has worked with Team Impact Ministries for about nine years. "It's just an amazing opportunity to stand before people... (and tell) them about Jesus Christ."



WITNESSING FOR CHRIST — Russell Mord (right), pastor of Sturgis Church, Sturgis, hands our Bikers' Bibles on August 20 during the Sturgis South Motorcycle Rally. Local churches, Golden Triangle Association, and Mississippi Baptists joined hands to minister to the 40,000 people attending the rally in the Oktibbeha County town. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Team Impact had the joy of seeing 25,000 people come to know the Lord through their ministry in 2004, Talley said. The ministry has booked nearly 100 performances in 2005, he pointed out, and will also speak in 800 schools.

"There is a spiritual need for reaching out and touching people with this ministry. In the state of Mississippi, we are in the Bible Belt and people are too familiar with churches so we need a way of bringing them out of the 'normal' situation and bring God to them. It's a very good way of getting the message to them," said Haynes.

Mord said that at the end of each Team Impact performance, onlookers were invited to come to the stage and receive the Bikers' Bibles free of charge. "In the U.S., I've never seen so many people lined to get a Bible. We literally couldn't keep enough in our hands, we passing them out so fast."

Mord said 228 cases of water were given away this year, along with thousands of evangelistic tracts and Bikers' Bibles. "We were running some numbers after the rally ended, and we believe about 8,500 people were evangelized. That's about one-quarter of the people at the rally," he said.

Mord offered his thanks to the churches and groups involved in the evangelization effort, including Friendship Church,

Sturgis; Longview Church, Starkville; Meadowview Church, Starkville; Fellowship Church, Mathiston; Wake Forest Church, Sturgis; Bethesda Church, Crawford; Mt. Zion Church, Columbus; New Covenant Church, a non-denominational church in Starkville; Golden Triangle Association, Columbus; and the Arkansas Baptist Bikers Association.

"Without them, we would not have had the impact that we did. This is all about shining the light of Jesus Christ, and they helped the light shine brighter," he said.

Mord said rally planners are preparing for an even larger crowd in August 2006, the tenth anniversary of the formal inauguration of the Sturgis South Motorcycle Rally.

"We're going to need more volunteers than ever, so I encourage more Mississippi Baptists to get involved. The kind of impact we're having for Christ at this rally was unthinkable just a few years ago," he said.

For more information on the Sturgis South ministry effort, contact the Evangelism Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278. E-mail: esmith@mbcb.org.

Team Impact can be contacted at P.O. Box 1930, Coppell, TX 75019. Telephone: (972) 315-9333. Web site: www.team-impact.com.

A video report on the rally can be viewed at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board web site: www.mbc.org.

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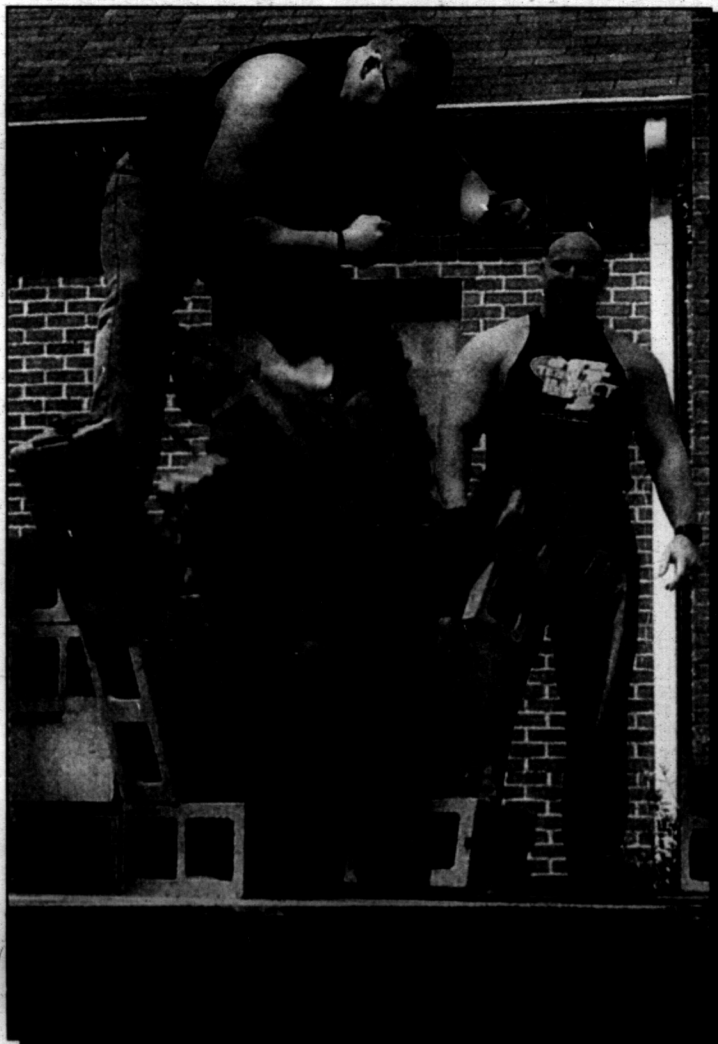
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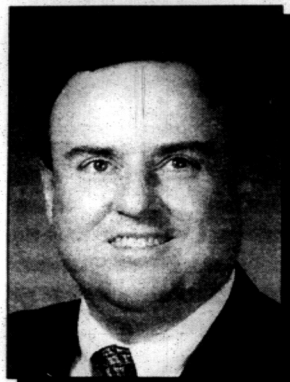
BRICK-BREAKING

Hunter Grimes of Walker, La., a member of the Team Impact International Christian ministry, pounds a stack of bricks in front of Sturgis Church, Sturgis, on August 20 during the Sturgis South Motorcycle Rally. Looking on is Team Impact cohort Barry Haynes of Vicksburg. Mississippi Baptists sponsored the Dallas-based Christian ministry's appearance at the rally, in an effort to assist local Baptist churches and Golden Triangle Association in reaching the lost for Christ. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)





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Another retreat from right

The takeover of the state's public universities is now complete. In the wake of Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood's decision last week not to appeal a ruling earlier this summer by Hinds County Chancery Judge Tommie Wise that circumvented state law and allowed the universities to begin teaching gambling courses, we can anticipate that the big out-of-state gambling interests will soon start calling the shots at the schools.

After all, that's what has happened in virtually every Mississippi location where the gambling camel has been allowed to get his nose in the tent. As the old saw goes, it won't be long before the whole camel is in the tent with us. Don't believe it? Consider the following facts.

Gamblers initially agreed to limit their gambling facilities to floating casino boats docked at specified locations, including the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi River. The casinos now boast massive land-based developments all along the Mississippi coastline and have even crept into Biloxi's Back Bay — barely within sight of the coastline. In

addition, make a quick detour by the Isle of Capri casino in Coahoma County and see how far away sits the casino from the Mississippi River water's edge.

When the Imperial Palace, one of the Back Bay casinos, violated its building permit and added so many floors that Keesler Air Force Base's flight path was threatened, the Biloxi City Council looked the other way and allowed the skyscraper to be completed, so fearful were they of the gamblers' political power. Attend just about any public meeting from the state legislature to city governments in areas with legalized gambling, and the debate on just about

any important issue will eventually center around, "How will this affect the casinos?"

Meanwhile, Mississippi's public university leaders salivate at the opportunity to turn our schools over to the gamblers. The judge's ruling, which clearly contradicts state law as well as an earlier attorney general's ruling, and the same attorney general's decision last week not to appeal the judge's ruling, has given those leaders a free hand to move forward with their gambling course offerings.

"We decided not to expend the court's time to address this matter because the Legislature, if they choose to fix the statute, could do so before an appellate court could render a decision," according to state attorney general spokesman Jacob Ray as quoted in an August 18 article by Jimmie E. Gates in The Hattiesburg American newspaper.

Whatever that means. To us common folk, it sure sounds a lot like lawyer talk for, "We don't have the political courage to defend our earlier position on this issue."

With the attorney general's decision not to appeal, the last line of defense against the gambling onslaught at our universities has been taken down. Neither the State College Board nor the universities' leadership have the backbone to stand up for what is right.

"We are preparing Mississippians for executive positions for Mississippi's number one industry," said Emie Wilson, associate professor of tourism at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, as quoted in The Hattiesburg American article.

Such is the state of intellectual discourse today in our public universities.

"TO BE HONEST, I CAN'T SEE A
THING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE, SIR. IT'S
STILL PRETTY MUCH UP TO YOU. SCARY,
ISN'T IT?"

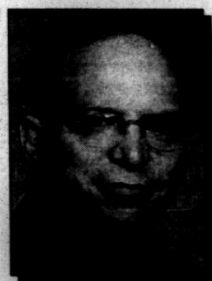


Forget about the families impoverished by legalized gambling. Forget about the families broken up by legalized gambling. Forget about the hungry children shivering in locked cars in casino parking lots, while their parents gamble away their meager paychecks in splendor. Forget about the breathtaking increase in the number of Gamblers Anonymous chapters across Mississippi.

Forget about all that. The most important thing is "preparing Mississippians for executive positions for Mississippi's number one industry."

What clearer picture could there possibly be of the moral wasteland that our beloved state has become?

GUEST OPINION:



'Raunchy' — the newest 'R'

By Warren Throckmorton
Grove City, Pa

School is starting around the country. Awaiting anxious students are new schedules, new teachers, new challenges, and in some school districts, old controversies about what books should be read in school.

School districts have been facing challenges over what should be in the library as long as there have been libraries, but recent changes in the world of children's literature and our society have focused the debates on matters of teen sexuality.

A recent MSNBC article regarding adolescent reading material describes growing parental concern over the explicit nature of books aimed at young teens. Correspondent Janet Shamlian reports on some recent hot selling teen titles: "In Claiming Georgia Tate, a father has sex with his daughter. In Rainbow Party, teens make plans for a sex party. And in Teach Me, due out in late August and seemingly ripped from the day's headlines, there's a student-teacher affair."

While I am not aware of challenges to any of these specific books, if they find their way into schools, there probably will be. Recent disputes over books in Lexington, Ma., Pleasant Valley, Ia., and Columbus, Oh., have divided communities and led to legal action.

Perhaps the mother of all of these disputes over school reading material is in Fayetteville, Ark. Laurie Taylor, mother of two school age children in Fayetteville, recently found numerous volumes of fiction that vividly describe sexual acts of all sorts. *Doing It*, features teacher-pupil sex; *Rainbow Boys*, describes adult-teen unprotected sex; and *Choke*, uncovering the world of sexaholics, was graphic enough to have portions excerpted in *Playboy*.

Perhaps the worst find was *Push*, by author Sapphire. Filled with graphic sex, the book's low point is perhaps the lead character's description of sex with an infant.

Taylor is formally challenging these and other fiction books with similar content. She is not asking that the

school remove all of the books permanently from the shelves; she simply wants librarians to gain a parent's permission before allowing children to have them.

She also wants the school to follow its own review policy while access is mediated by parents. The Fayetteville schools have a policy that requires the school to review materials parents find objectionable. For these reasonable requests, she has been pilloried in the local press as narrow minded and bigoted. The school district has received a veiled threat of a lawsuit from national groups, including the National Coalition Against Censorship.

Is Taylor overreacting? Should these books be in public school libraries? Before I throw in my view, let me jump back to

the MSNBC article on racy teen novels. Reporter Shamlian writes: "Experts say books like these are gratuitous — even dangerous — and parents need to know that." She then quotes a specialist in adolescent psychiatry, John Sargent: "They buy it, thinking they're doing something nice for their kid, when, in fact, they have no clue what it is they're exposing their kid to."

Where a review panel of parents and teachers cannot agree about the appropriateness of a contested book, then parental permission should be required in order to read it. If teachers want to use explicit portions of contested books, then parents should be notified.

Schools should allow parents to have a clue what their kids exposed to. Such a policy does no violence to free speech, nor is it censorship. If some parents want raunchy to join reading, 'ritin' and 'rithmetic, they are free to buy their own children sexually explicit material for consumption at home.

Throckmorton is associate professor of psychology and fellow for psychology and public policy in the Center for Vision and Values at Grove City College, a Christian college in Pennsylvania. His commentary, edited for length, appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

So. Baptist worker: Gaza just the beginning

JERUSALEM (BP) — As painful as it has been, Israel's evacuation of nearly 9,000 of its own angry and heartbroken settlers from the Gaza Strip may be the last "easy" part of forging peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Many tougher issues remain, both sides agree. For starters: What to do about the much larger West Bank? How to deal with rapid Arab population growth within Israel itself? How to guarantee safe borders and peaceful relations between Israel and a future Palestinian state? How to end terrorist attacks once and for all?

Perhaps the toughest: What to do about Jerusalem?

"Gaza is kind of cut off over there by itself, so it was a lot easier to negotiate," said a longtime Southern Baptist representative in Israel. "Once you start talking about the West Bank, you're starting to talk about Jerusalem, and that's where the peace agreement fell apart last time. It's going to come down to Jerusalem."

The holy city claims the hearts of Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. It is, in turn, claimed by both Israelis and Palestinians as their eventual and "eternal" capital. East Jerusalem — which lies primarily within the West Bank controlled by Jordan before the 1967 Arab-Israeli war — is overwhelmingly Palestinian.

A third of Jerusalem's total population consists of ethnic Arabs. Conflicting political claims on the city must be settled before a permanent peace agreement can be completed — but that's getting ahead of the game.

The Southern Baptist worker cautioned that even the "easy" Gaza evacuation, though supported by a majority of Israelis, still might bring down the government of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. For years Sharon aggressively supported the set-



TEARS FOR GAZA — A young woman cries as she prays on the women's side of the Western Wall plaza, among tens of thousands attending a peaceful prayer session Aug. 10 to seek divine intervention to call off the evacuation of Jewish settlers from Gaza. (BP photo by Lacy Atkins)

tlar movement in Palestinian areas. Now, ultra-Orthodox Jewish settlers who once hailed him as a hero and patron revile Sharon as a traitor to their cause.

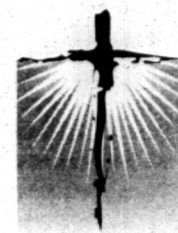
"This is very risky politically for Sharon," the worker said. "If the pullout goes successfully and the settlers are peacefully resettled within Israel proper, there's a good chance he'll stay in office. If they're attacked or if terrorism starts coming back into Israel, then you have a really good chance he'll lose his office. It's right on the edge."

Sharon himself came to power in 2001, the worker added, partly because many Israelis thought

former Prime Minister Ehud Barak showed weakness by pulling the Israeli military out of southern Lebanon in 2000 without a formal peace agreement with Lebanon and Syria.

"That's why Sharon is saying [to the Palestinians], 'If you attack us when we're pulling out, we will attack you without mercy,'" the worker said. "The Israelis know if they show weakness in the pullout then they could be attacked from every direction."

The worker believes only one person can bring true peace: Jesus Christ. "We're very pro-Israeli and we're very pro-Palestinian, because we think they all need salvation," he said. "We've got to pray for the peace of Jerusalem — and we know that's really praying for Jesus' return, because that will be the true time of peace."



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

**THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

Record THE BAPTIST

The worker listed four other urgent prayer needs:

- For Messianic Jewish believers who follow Jesus as Messiah. They number in the thousands, according to estimates, but still face persecution in some areas. "Pray that they will know how to be strong and build the bridges necessary to communicate the Gospel and be peacemakers."

- For Gaza and the West Bank, that new freedoms will be used for "the right things — and not just more oppression of the Palestinian people by other Palestinians."

- For real religious freedom among Israelis and Palestinians. "If they're free to choose and they really search for the truth, we know where the truth lies — and that's in Jesus."

- For the disillusioned and despairing Jewish settlers, "that if they feel God didn't work the way they thought, they would look to see who God really is and open their hearts and minds to Jesus when they see He is Truth."

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WorldCrafts to expand

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The nonprofit WorldCrafts ministry of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) has introduced a new website to highlight its imported handcrafts from 31 countries around the world. The website, www.WorldCraftsVillage.com, features 300 handmade crafts and provides information on the artisan groups and their countries of origin. It also highlights a different country each month. The website provides detailed product descriptions and allows customers to search by item type, country of origin, new items, and clearance items. Customers also can sign up to receive updates on products and special offers. WorldCrafts helps establish personal relationships with craftspeople who live in poverty and helps provide them with a steady income. The ministry ensures fair wages and non-exploitive conditions for more than 2,000 craftspeople worldwide. The artisans are paid for their work when they provide the products, and WorldCrafts markets the items in the United States. The ministry has allowed some women to escape prostitution and slavery, and enabled others to receive an education and graduate from college. New churches also have been built, initiated by the WorldCrafts ministry. For more information on WorldCrafts, ordering crafts, or hosting a party or event, visit the new website, www.worldcraftsvillage.com, or e-mail worldcrafts@wmu.org. To order, call WMU customer service toll-free at (800) 968-7301.

Looking back

10 years ago

The Executive Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board votes to employ Edna Ellison in the Woman's Missionary Union. Ellison comes after serving as executive director of California's WMU.

20 years ago

Baptist churches along the Mississippi Gulf Coast suffer major damage and are without electricity as Sunday services approach, thanks to Hurricane Elena, the most dangerous storm to hit Mississippi since Camille in 1969.

50 years ago

Mississippi Baptists acquire Camp Kittiwake in Pass Christian, the first Mississippi Baptist-owned assembly grounds in the state. W. R. Roberts will direct the assembly program for 1956.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

PATIENCE

Patience is a wonderful virtue, a commodity in great demand, and in very little supply. Even if you have patience you are not able to store it up, and strangely enough whenever everything else like understanding, emotional well-being, and physical endurance seem to be drained away patience generally leaves with them. At the very moment that you really need it you seem to have it the least.

During the summer our son, his wife, and family were going out West on vacation. Day one was going to be a long drive. It was their goal to leave Jackson and get to Amarillo, Texas, which was over 800 miles away, by that evening. About the middle of the morning I received a call from the traveling family and Rob asked, "Kids, what is the word for the day?" Three excited, strong, little voices yelled from the back of the van, "Patience." I thought what a wonderful teachable moment, but I wonder how long it will last. They were making progress for they had already exited Mississippi, crossed Louisiana, and were in Tyler, Texas. That was good, but Tyler is a long way from Amarillo. We talked a little while, and they continued chasing the sun to the West.

As I was returning from a meeting that night, I received a call on my cell phone. It was the traveling family. I said, "Where are you?" He said, "Well, we are getting close to Amarillo, but we are about 30 minutes past the word of the day." We laughed, and I understood what he meant. Then he said, "They really have been good, and they have worked at exercising patience."



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

The fact is you have to work at having, keeping, and living with patience. You can run out of patience at work, at home, at church, on the road, in a crowd, by yourself, at a ballgame, on an airplane, buying groceries, at the fishing hole, working in the yard, or trying to relax. I cannot think of any place or any experience in life where it is not possible to run out of patience, but if it is such a good thing to have, why is it so hard to get and to hold on to, or maybe a better question is, "How do you go about having patience?"

To answer that question I think it is important that we listen to the Scripture that would indicate to us that patience is not a natural part of our makeup. In fact, it is supernatural and can only be found in full bloom when we live under the control of the Holy Spirit. In writing about the fruit of the Spirit, the Apostle Paul lists patience or longsuffering, as it is sometimes translated in Scripture, as one of the things that the Spirit of God produces in the believer when we walk with the Lord. Even then it should be understood that we have to have a conscious sensitivity and willing effort to experience patience. How do you do that? Here are just a few suggestions that might help each of us.

For one thing, just determine to relax. Just cool it! It is an amazing thing to realize that some studies show that with effort and some training a person can actually slow their breathing down and lower their heart rate by mentally backing off. As a general rule the opposite thing takes place. When we need patience and should relax, we rev up the engine, intensify our feelings, and make things worse.

A second thing is to remember to keep life in perspective. See the moment in the context of time, really important issues, and significant principles that sometimes get lost in a patience empty world. Rarely is cutting someone off in traffic in order to save two to three seconds of travel time a life or death situation. Seldom are relationships enhanced and strengthened by exploding in anger when someone does not live up to the momentary expectations that you desired. Patience can provide an awful lot of good things that other untamed and uncontrolled emotions destroy.

A third thing is it is important to restrain. In order to have patience it is important to learn to keep yourself in check. Spiritual growth involves discipline. Discipline involves consistently doing

the things that you should do and consistently not doing the things that you shouldn't do. Sometimes impulsive, impatient people say things, act radically and uncontrollably, and then excuse it by saying, "I just can't help it." Given the right circumstances and the right motivation you can restrain yourself from doing almost anything. You may not have the patience to drive at or under the speed limit and excuse your behavior with the explanation that it is just your impulsive drive, but I guarantee you that if you see blue lights come on behind you all of a sudden you learn to restrain.

Several years ago I knew a guy who was one of those folks that just always had to have the last word. Usually he was somewhat contentious. He always had to express his view and his way. In a court case he unleashed his tongue to express and verbalize his views to the point where the judge after giving him a warning found him in contempt. The guy did not quite understand what that was about so he contested it only to be cited again. After a few of those citations, he learned that you could restrain yourself.

Wouldn't it be good if we could all experience God's strength enabling us to have patience and not say things when we shouldn't and over react and do things we ought not to do? For most of us our days would be blessed if we observed the word of the day — PATIENCE.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

MS POSITIONS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN ROLLING FORK, Miss., is currently seeking a director of youth. Please send resumes with references to youth committee chairman, First Baptist Church, 73 North Second St., Rolling Fork, MS 39159.

FIRST CHURCH, GLUCKSTADT, Miss., seeking a music minister for Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights only. Blended worship, free-flowing format. Contact Author Comans at (601) 209-6000 or email authorcomans@aol.com.

MUSIC DIRECTOR WITH SOME ASSOCIATE PASTOR RESPONSIBILITIES. Full or part-time possible. Church is 6 miles north of Blue Mountain College. Send resume to Springdale Baptist Church, 581 East Walnut Street, Ripley, MS 38663.

SEEKING YOUTH MINISTER. Position is bi-vocational working with 7th through 12th grades. Located about 36 miles south of Memphis, Tennessee and 7 miles east of Senatobia in north-west Mississippi. Please send your resume to Looxahoma Baptist Church, attention: Search Team, 808 Lyles Road, Senatobia, MS 38668.

MINISTER OF YOUTH/CHILDREN: Dry Creek Baptist Church in Magee, Mississippi. Resumes being accepted for a bivocational minister of youth/children. Send resume to Dry Creek Baptist Church, 1246 Dry Creek Road, Mendenhall, MS 39114.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, LAMBERT, MISS., is seeking a part-time minister of music. Please send resumes to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 145, Lambert, MS 38643 or contact church office at (662) 326-7772, 8:00 a.m.-12 noon, Monday-Friday. Call Don O'Quinn after 6:00 p.m. at (662) 326-7336.

VALLEY GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pontotoc Association seeks part-time (bi-vocational) youth minister. Housing available, mail resume to 815 Kings Hwy, Pontotoc, MS 38863.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: First Baptist Church in Greenville, Miss., is seeking a dynamic individual to oversee its music and worship ministries. Approx. Sunday School attendance 400, blended worship, TV and radio ministry. Send resumes to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1163, Greenville, MS 38702, www.fbcgreenville.net.

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CHRISTIAN LONG DISTANCE, 3.9 cents interstate, 4.9 cents in state. No monthly service charge. Call (866) 587-8346 or www.lowermyphonebill.com/haroldtt.

A CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME in northwest Alabama is seeking a Christian couple to work with boys ages 6 to 18. The home is for abused, neglected, orphaned and homeless boys. Position provides salary plus benefits. For more information call (256) 356-8900.

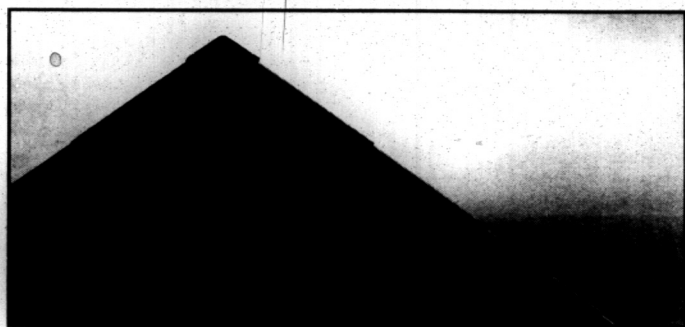
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

August 25, 2005

HouseTops is a **Baptist Record** supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's **Communication Services**.



Are you interested in:
A Fulfilling Marriage?
True Success and Significance?
More Family Time?
Meaningful Communication?
Equipping Kids to Choose the Best?

**NO
LIMITS.**

**Set your
family on
the right
course!**

MARRIAGE MAKEOVER

Feb. 17-18, 2006

Ridgecrest BC, Madison

Cost: \$25



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: JERRY PIPES
Author of "Family to Family" and
"Building a Successful Family"

Break-out Sessions on the Four Seasons of Marriage
Led by Professional Family Counselors

Also on Blended Marriages

Contact Glenn at gshows@mbcb.org
or 1-800-748-1651

LITERACY TRAINING - GARAYWA

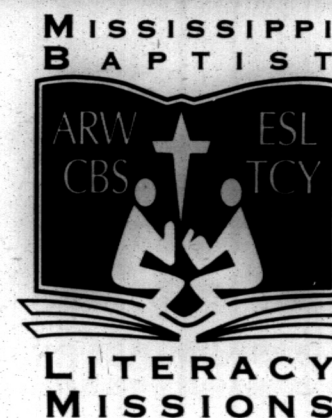
Thursday, October 13 thru Saturday, October 15

THREE TRACKS OFFERED

• **TRACK 1** 10/13, 1 p.m. - 10/15, lunch
Basic 16-hour workshops for
Adult Reading and Writing (ARW)
English as a Second Language (ESL)
Tutoring Children and Youth (TCY)

• **TRACK 2** 10/14, 1 p.m. - 10/15, lunch
8-hour workshops for
**Experienced English as a Second
Language (ESL)**
English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
Chronological Bible Storying (CBS)

• **TRACK 3** 10/15, 7 p.m. - 10/15, lunch
Seminar A - Identification of Worldview:
*Learn that how you see others affects your
ministry*
Seminar B - Biblical Basis of Missions:
*Discover mission principles through a
careful search of the Scriptures*
Seminar C - Incarnational Ministry:
*Engaging other religions, sharing your wit-
ness, possible frustrations to cross-cultural
witnessing*



COST:

Registration (for all
tracts) is \$20 plus
meals and lodging.

**REGISTRATION
REQUIRED**

For more information,
contact Paula Smith at
601-292-3336 or
psmith@mbcb.org

For a registration form, please visit our Web site at:
www.mbcb.org/events_details.aspx?ID=355

2005

Professional Certification for Ministry Assistants and Ministry Office SkillShops

September 13-15
Camp Garaywa, Clinton

Certification leader: Lana Rose

For more info: Kay McDonnell, 1-800-748-1651, Ext.
305, or 601-292-3305 or E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org

The SkillShops leader: Sandy Sigmon

OFFICE MANAGEMENT I

Are you the office manager, administrative assistant, coordinating secretary, or all of these as the only ministry assistant in your office? Whatever your title, it is your job to coordinate the smooth flow of work through your office. Office Management examines how your role relates to each of the four management functions. You will study office organizational structure, functional layout and design, and inventory control procedures. You will get a head start on compiling a policy and procedure manual for your office, and will learn to save valuable time by sharing the workload with co-workers and volunteers.

OFFICE TEAMWORK

Is it a joy to work in your office? Are your co-workers also your friends? Learn to build healthy working relationships based on respect and trust. Office Teamwork will enable you to sharpen your communication skills for better understanding and help you handle difficult people and awkward situations. You will find out how you and your boss can become a more effective team and how to give strengthening encouragement to the troubled minister.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

Ministers' Wives Conference



Monday, October 31, 2005
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON
(Fifth Floor)
1:15 to 4:45 p.m.



Judy Gordon

National, state and local speaker
English teacher and wife of Keith Gordon,
consultant, MBCB Pastor/Leadership
Development department



Patsy B. Sheffield

Former MBCB ministry assistant
Pastor's wife (twice)
Married to Forrest Sheffield, pastor of
Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo, Miss.



Lori Schuler

Worship leader, soloist and songwriter
Past minister of music in several
Mississippi churches
Wife of Bennon

AGENDA

- 1:15 p.m. Registration: Fifth Floor of FBC, Jackson
1:30 Welcome, Introductions and
Fellowship Greeting: *Shirley Futral*
2:00 Musical Inspiration: *Lori Schuler*
2:15 *Judy Gordon*
3:15 Fellowship
3:30 Musical Inspiration: *Lori Schuler*
3:45 *Patsy Sheffield*
4:30 Musical Closing: *Lori Schuler*
4:45 Adjourn

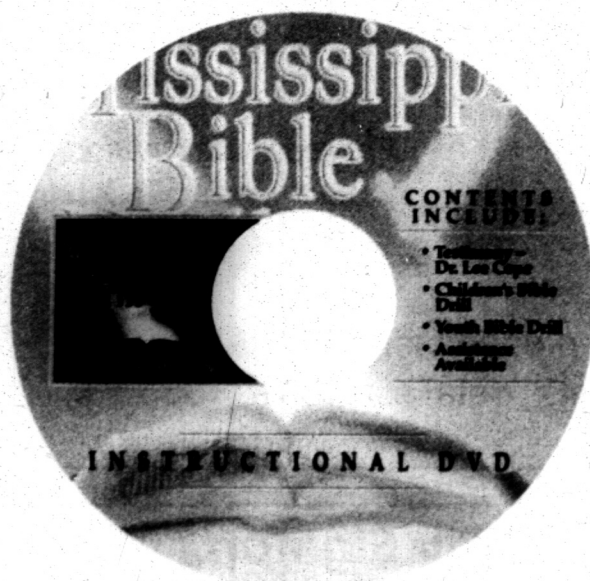
REGISTRATION

Preregistration is encouraged so that we may better prepare. You may register in one of the following ways:

Mail: Return the form below to:
Pastor/Leadership Development Department/MBCB
PO Box 530
Jackson MS 39205-0530
Phone: 800.748.1651, ext. 305; 601.292.3305
E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org
Fax: 601.714.7426

Name _____
Church _____
Address _____
Phone (h) _____
E-mail _____

For more info:
Contact Kay McDonnell
1-800-748-1651, ext. 305 or
601-292-3305



2005 Bible Drill Clinics

Red Cycle

Help for leaders of Bible Buddies,
Children's Bible Drill, Youth Bible
Drill and Speakers Tournament

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

- **Calvary BC, Tupelo**
Led by Harvey Ellis, MBCB Youth Specialist
- **FBC, Biloxi**
Led by Don Hicks, MBCB Bible Drill Consultant

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

- **Calvary BC, Starkville**
Led by Harvey Ellis, MBCB Youth Specialist
- **West McComb BC, McComb**
Led by Don Hicks, MBCB Bible Drill Consultant

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

- **Lauderdale Baptist Association office**
Marion Miss.
Led by Steve Jackson, pastor
McLaurin Heights BC, Pearl
- **Camp Garaywa, Clinton (activity building)**
Led by Don Hicks, MBCB Bible Drill Consultant

All of these clinics are scheduled for 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Each participant will receive an instructional video in
either DVD or VCR format.

For more info, contact Gwen Shelley at 601-292-3284
or 1-800-748-1651 or gshelley@mbcb.org

GA Ageless Mother/Daughter Overnight - Garaywa Ages 5-105 Oct. 21-22

Mothers and daughters share the excitement of missions learning including worship, campfire, crafts, recreation and a missionary visit.

Cost: \$35
Deadline: Oct. 11

For more info: Call the
WMU at 1-800-748-1651
or 601-292-3316.



"Serving God with Determined Faith: Studies in the Book of Nehemiah"

January Bible Study Preview Clinics



Gene Mims

Mims serves as president of the Inter-national Baptist Network in Atlanta, Ga. He has served as a pastor for over 20 years and more recently as the vice president for LifeWay Church Resources. Mims has authored seven books including *Kingdom Principles of Church Growth* and *The Kingdom Focused Church*.

For more info: Contact the Sunday School Department at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3292 or e-mail jellis@mbcb.org

Leading the studies this year are:

Dates and Locations:

Monday

September 19, 2005

- Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain (led by Gene Mims)
- William Carey College, Hattiesburg (led by Ronald Meeks)

Tuesday

September 20, 2005

- BSU, Delta State University, Cleveland (led by Gene Mims)
- Pike Association Office, McComb (led by Ronald Meeks)

Thursday

September 22, 2005

- Lauderdale Association Office, Marion (led by Ronald Meeks)
- Rankin Association Office, Brandon (led by Gene Mims)

Registration begins at 9 a.m.
Conference: 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

There is no cost and no preregistration.



Ronald Meeks

Meeks is the associate professor of Bible and director of Church Relations at Blue Mountain College. Prior to joining the faculty of Blue Mountain College, he served as the associate pastor of the Oakland Baptist Church in Corinth. In addition, Meeks has served as the pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Pass Christian and Wanilla Baptist Church in Monticello.



GA Missions Madness

Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Floods, Oh My!

Learn about Disaster Relief efforts in our state and the world!

Hear from a missionary about living through a tsunami!

Saturday, November 12

Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Registration begins at 8 a.m. Early registration deadline is October 29. Cost \$8 per person (after deadline \$10 per person if space is available). Confirmation, directions and additional information will be mailed upon receipt of registration.

For more info: Call the WMU at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3316.

Pray this day for...

August 26-September 8, 2005

"It is interesting that prayer does not move to a secondary priority in the believer's life. It is either a top priority or it moves to the periphery of our lives."

"REAL TIME FOR REAL PRAYER" by C. Thomas Wright

Pray for a small group of couples in Punta Arenas, Chile, involved in a viewing of a video series on family relationships. Most of these couples are not Christians and are being taught biblical family values through this series. Pray for the Xtreme Patagonia Team as they share with these couples about God's love for them and their families.

In May, the 60-year anniversary of the end of World War II was celebrated. Senior citizens in Chemnitz, Germany, remember the war, the bombing of their city (80% being destroyed), rebuilding, Communism, the "Fall of the Wall" and democracy. Intercede that they will place their trust in the Father, the unchanging God, and that He will give them peace.

For: (1) Church Leadership Training, Main Street BC, Hattiesburg (WMU); (2) MBCB Executive Committee Meeting, Baptist Building, 10 a.m.; (3) MBCB Meeting, Baptist Building, 1 p.m.; (4) Pray for Prime Minister Abdullah bin Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia (southeastern Asia).

"Rejoice with us in the progress of the church at Tera," writes the Songhai Team of Niger and Mali. "We can see individual believers who are maturing in their faith. Pray for the leadership of the church as they plan to multiply the church soon, starting their meetings in two different places."

For: (1) Baptist Foundation Month (MBF Emphasis); (2) Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering Emphasis; (3) Pauline White, Lynch, Ky., director of Manna House asks prayer for the children in the communities, 95% are unchurched. Also pray for the volunteer teams working this summer to reach these children and their families.

For: (1) Church Leadership Training, Camp Garaywa, Clinton, 26th-27th (WMU); (2) Cheryl R. Selby, Austin, Texas is a MSC coordinator for housing, clothes, food, bus passes, and other immediate needs for Christian ex-offenders returning from prison. Pray for the tender hearts of Christians to continue financial support.

Keep in prayer the serious economic problems where Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina join. There are over 100,000 people suffering financially as the Brazilian and Paraguayan governments crack down on illegal commercial endeavors. Pray that all the people of the area will have legal, sustainable jobs and opportunities to hear the gospel.

The Samburu of Kenya believe in heaven as the place where God lives. They say, "He is near, but He is far." They believe that sin is against man, not God, and that judgment comes from man, not God. They believe that when they die, they simply cease to exist. Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal His truth in a way that will overcome these barriers of cultural beliefs.

Chris Clarke, Burns, Ky., is an equestrian ministry chaplain. He and his family conduct Cowboy Church services at horse shows and other equestrian events. Please pray for Chris as he recovers from a serious horse-back riding accident in 2004.

For: (1) Discipleship Training Launch Day (D&F); (2) The Kaikolar people of India are weavers, and their main religion is Hinduism. Their primary language is Tamil, and they do have the Bible, the JESUS film, and other videos and broadcasts available to them. Pray that the 210 known believers would feel the burden to spread the Good News among all their people.

For: (1) Labor Day; (2) Hubert Ekstrum, Alvin, Texas, works as a MSC missionary with Men Campbuilding Ministry. Please pray for teams that will be building houses in the city of Battacoloa, located on the eastern side of the island ravaged by the tsunami.

In 1991, Saddam Hussein began driving Marsh Arabs from Iraq by burning, poisoning and draining the marshes where they had lived for centuries. Some sources estimate that as many as 90% of the population fled to Iran. Now, they are slowly returning to Iraq. Pray that Marsh Arabs in Iraq, Iran and beyond will have an opportunity to learn of Christ's love for them.

For: (1) Baptist Building STAFF AT HOME DAYS, 7 - 9th; (2) A number of churches in Durban, South Africa, are experiencing growth. Pray for the local churches that are in need of more space and trained leadership. Ask the Father to provide for these churches in such a way that His name will be glorified.

For: (1) AMD/MBCB Prayer Leadership Retreat, Camp Garaywa, Clinton, noon, 8th - noon, 9th (MS); (2) Ask God to continue raising up workers who will serve in Chengyang, China. Also ask the Father to strengthen and protect those who are working there now and provide them with health, safety and spiritual strength.

FALL CHAPLAINS' TRAINING

September 23, 2005

8:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Baptist Building, 515 Mississippi St.
Jackson

PURPOSE: To Provide More Effective Ministry for professional and volunteer chaplains and all interested persons.

(note: we have deleted the word "volunteer" from our title)

Sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Chaplains' Association and MBCB Evangelism Department

Cost of conference is \$5
Lunch will be provided.

To register
call Elaine Smith

Evangelism Department
1-800-748-1651 or
601-292-3278
Email: esmith@mbcb.org

Morning Session: **STRESS AND THE HOW'S AND WHY'S OF IT**
Common Acute Stressors
Effects of Stress - in childhood, the elderly, caregivers
Who is at Risk
Program Leader:

Ed McDaniel, pastor, North Winona Baptist Church
Retired Chaplain Colonel, US Army Reserve

Afternoon Sessions: **"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"**

How Organ and Tissue donation is viewed in the world today, and the role society and the church plays in this pivotal life saving matter.

Program Leader:
Erskine Gillespie, Community Outreach Coordinator,
Mid-South Transplant Foundation

ADVANCE HEALTH-CARE DIRECTIVE (LIVING WILL)

Program Leader:
Jane Earnest, Associate Director
Mississippi Baptist Foundation

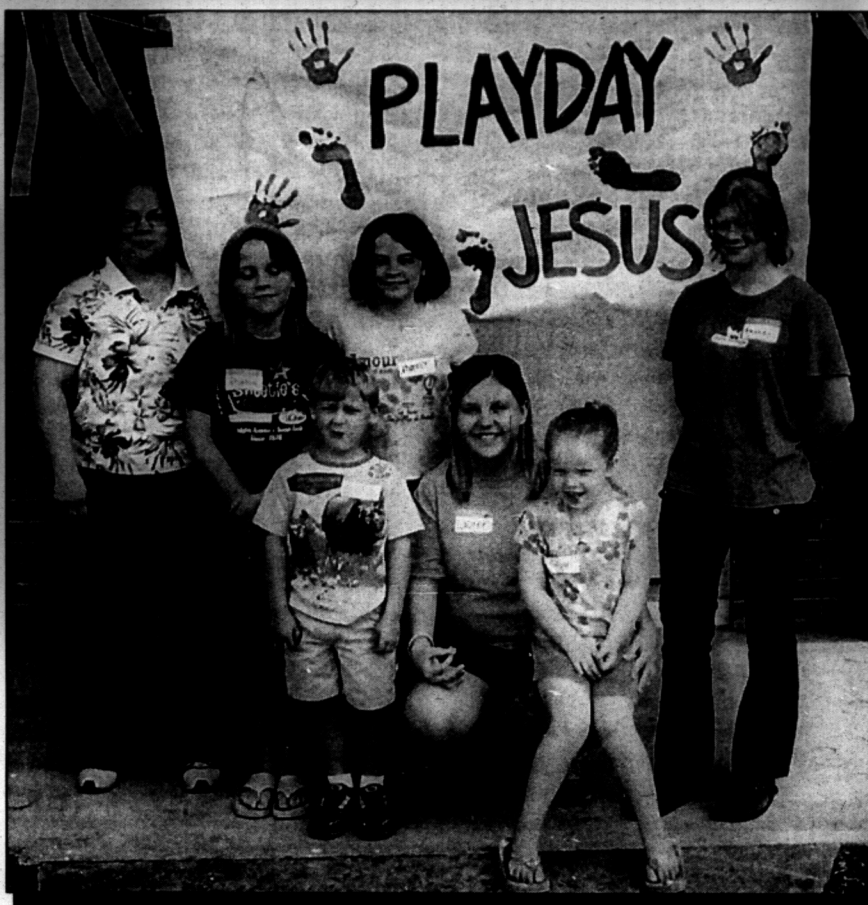
HOUSE TOPS

JUST FOR THE RECORD



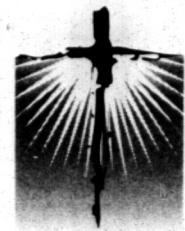
1. Newly-Elected Officials Service, Calvary Church, Durant

1. **Calvary Church, Durant**, recently held a special service for the city's newly-elected officials, the police department, and heads of city departments. Pastor Harold Schmidt preached from Romans 13:1-5. The special service was the first step in the Jesus is Lord over Durant Crusade, designed to break down racial and denominational barriers and tear down enemy strongholds. Pictured are public officials and Calvary Church deacons who were among the 100 people who attended the service.
2. **Acteens at Bellevue Church, Pontotoc Association**, recently held their first Play Day with Jesus, in which children participated in the study of Bible stories, crafts, music, physical activities, and lunch. Pictured are (back row, from left) Bylinda Hill, Shanna Henry, Shannon Carwyle, Amanda Montgomery, (from row, from left) Alan Hall, Lauren Patton, Madison Inmon. Tommy Inmon is pastor.



2. Acteens, Bellevue Church, Pontotoc Association

3. **Gunter Road Church, Florence**, will host The Revelations in concert on Aug. 21 at 6 p.m. For information, call (601) 932-4134 or (601) 720-8870.
4. **First Church, Pearl**, will host The Revelations in concert on August 28 at 6:30 p.m. For information, call (601) 939-4476 or (601) 720-8870.



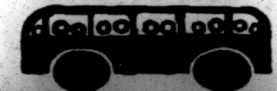
MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

STAFF CHANGES

Fairview Church, Indianola, has called Shelby Hazzard as pastor. A native of Greenville, he is studying at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth.

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Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
copyrighted 2005

PCZ EPVX RC VTNK, PM
YBDRMU PVMT BPUB
VTNKZ GM, PCZ BPUB
ORNKC BRHMKVW WTD
GM PC TWWKDRCO PCZ
P MPYDRWRYK UT OTZ
WTD P MEKKUMHKVVR-
CO MPNTGD.

KIBKMRPCM WRNK: UET

Clue: N = V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Three:Twenty-Nine.

COLLEGE NEWS

1. **Mississippi College's** Mortar Board chapter has received the Silver Torch Award. The award was presented to Angela Sood of Jackson, the 2005 chapter delegate, at the annual conference held July 22-24 in Columbus, Ohio. Only 40 Mortar Board chapters out of 213 nationwide were selected to receive this honor, which recognizes chapters that successfully meet all the chapter minimum standards for the year.

2. Paul Arledge Howell, a retired Hattiesburg postman who delivered mail for 34 years, has established a \$100,000 scholarship at **William Carey College** named in honor of his late wife, Juanita Clark Howell of Petal. The Paul Arledge

and Juanita Clark Howell Endowed Nursing Scholarship will be awarded annually and will aid deserving nursing students with good academic records who need financial assistance for education expenses as determined by the Dean of the School of Nursing.

Information on supporting William Carey College students through the college's scholarship program can be obtained by contacting the Office of Development at (601) 318-6193. E-mail: grant.guthrie@wmcarey.edu.

3. **Mississippi College's** Alumni Office and Athletic Department are sponsoring the sixth annual Backyard Brawl, an evening of fun on September 3 at 5 p.m. at



2. **WCC Scholarship, Howell and late wife Juanita**

Robinson-Hale Stadium on the Mississippi College campus. Cold drinks and bottled water will be pro-

vided. Football game kick-off is 7 p.m. Tickets for the game are \$10 in advance and can be ordered by calling (601) 925.3341.

4. The works of artist and Weir native Nannie Ruth Thompson will be featured at **William Carey College's** Lucille Parker Gallery from August 30-Sept. 23. A lunch-time reception honoring Thompson will open the show August 30 from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public. For more information, call (601) 318-6192. Thompson's daughter is Sharon Thompson, missions coordinator and assistant professor of psychology at William Carey College.

REVIVALS & HOMECOMINGS

Bethel Church, Hazlehurst: Homecoming, Aug. 28; Worship 11 a.m. followed by covered dish lunch. Dwayne Tullios, speaker. Del Gann, pastor.

Brewer Church, Richton: Revival, Sept. 11-14. Sun., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m. Bob Goolsby, speaker. Phillip Willis, music. Ken Ball, pastor.

Calvary Church, Louin: Revival, Aug. 28-31. Sun. 11:00 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch and afternoon services; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. Robert Rowzee, speaker. Randy Cuchens, music. William Spencer, pastor.

Canaan Church, Philadelphia: 100th Anniversary, Sept. 18; 10 a.m.-noon, followed by dinner on the grounds. Ben Farve, master of ceremonies. Calvin J. Issac, speaker. Arthur Ben, pastor.

Ebenezer Church, Attala Association: Revival, Sept. 6-8 at 7 p.m. Danny Lanier, speaker and special music. Larry Harvey, pastor.

First Church Shannon, Lee Association: Revival, Sept. 11-14. Sun., 11 a.m. with lunch to follow, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. Eddie Hamilton, speaker. Bryan Horner, music. Mike Bridges, pastor.

Franklin Creek Church, Franklin Creek: Homecoming, August 28. Worship, 11 a.m. followed by covered dish lunch and special music. Jerry Lennep, speaker. Shane Terrebonne, pastor.

Friendship East Church, Charleston: Homecoming, Sept. 11. Special song service 10 a.m. featuring Kilgore sisters; worship service, 11 a.m. Lunch at noon with special music afterward. Buster Thomas, speaker.

Ingram Church, Baldwin: Revival, Aug. 28-31; Sun. 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; noon meal in fellowship hall; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m. P.J. Scott, speaker. Jack Hollingsworth, music. Wayne Fredrick, interim pastor.

Montgomery Church, Summit: Revival, Sept. 11-14; Sunday 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7:30 p.m.; Hal Hatten, speaker. Todd McDaniel, music. Mike McKee, pastor.

Siloam Church, Magee: Homecoming, Aug. 28; Worship 11 a.m.; Lunch will be served. Gospel message in song by The Hosanna following noon meal. James Fortenberry, speaker. Beverly Roberts, music. James Garner, pastor.

Union Hall Church, Brookhaven: Truth or Consequences: A Revival for Youth, Aug. 28-30, 7 p.m. Brent Rutland, speaker. Joseph Oster, music. Kenny Cantrell, youth director. Billy Joe Deer, pastor.

Oak Grove Church, Benton: Homecoming and Revival, August 28-31. Sun., Sunday School 9 a.m., worship 10 a.m., followed by lunch in the fellowship hall and afternoon service; Thomas Peoples, speaking. Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m. Speakers: Mon., Mark Robinson; Tues., Clyde Pullen, Wed., Darby Combs, pastor. Fellowship following Wed. evening service.

Utica Church, Utica: Revival, Sept. 9-10 at 7 p.m., and Sept. 11 at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.; Jim Futral, speaker. Graham Smith, music. Ben James, Pastor.

Weir Church, Weir: Homecoming, Sept. 11, 10:30 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds at noon. A Time for Remembrance will be observed during the service. Jim Pender, pastor.

Williamsville Church, Kosciusko: Revival, Sept. 18-21. Sun., 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.. Danny Lanier, speaker. Doug Hubbard, music. Lee Yancey, interim pastor.

When You
Look
at Your
Estate Plan,
What Do
You See?



Remember September is Foundation Month

Generally viewed as "the cornerstone of estate planning," research has repeatedly shown that as many as 8 out of 10 Christians do not have a valid Last Will and Testament. This oversight by Christian people has too often resulted in a form of stewardship glaucoma, gradually robbing these faithful stewards of their lifelong vision of support and forcing them to leave both their loved ones and their favorite charity in the dark regarding the distribution of their hard-earned estate assets.

Since 1943, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation has enabled individuals to acquire 20/20 vision in the highly specialized area of charitable estate planning. Your stewardship vision, perhaps your greatest gift, deserves no less. If you want to see your charitable estate planning goals realized, give the Foundation a call. And if you would like to order Estate Planning bulletin inserts for your church, call (601) 292-3210.



THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

When Heaven Comes Down

Revelation 21:1-7, 22-27; 22:1-5

By Rhoda Royce

Homecoming at Mississippi College is one of our best days every year. Last fall, our two speakers were our own Miss Mississippi 2004 Jalin Woods and our distinguished alumnus Edwin Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston. It was exciting just being in the room with these two wonderful alumni and other friends for a little while. Someday, all Christians will participate in a great homecoming to the dwelling place described in our Scripture passages for this session. Like a homecoming invitation that describes the plans for the event, these Scriptures invite us to marvel at God's plans for our eternal home.

New Heaven and New Earth (21:1-7)

Revelation 20:11, studied last week, describes heaven and earth fleeing from the judging presence of God. Now we see a "new heaven and a new earth" replacing the first heaven and earth that are no more. This new heaven and new earth bear no mark of sin or suffering, as did the old. Why has the "sea" ceased to exist? The ocean was a frightful reality for the ancients, often a symbol of death. There many people drowned, and those who died there could not be properly buried. So the absence of the sea is like the absence of death.

After this vision of God's new heaven and earth, John sees the "Holy City," the new Jerusalem, "coming down out of heaven



Royce

from God," adorned as a bride for her groom. A bride typically spares no effort and, often, no expense, to look as beautiful as possible on her wedding day. God's dwelling place is magnificently lovely.

From the throne, a loud voice proclaims God's presence with His people. God is with us now, of course, in the presence of His Holy Spirit. Yet He is also removed from us as well. What will it be like to experience God in this way? I do not know all that will mean, by any means, but I like what I read here. It sounds so tender. He will blot our tears, as we recognize the end of all death, crying, and pain. All we know of God's character in Christ forecasts for us what it will be like to live in God's presence forever.

In John's vision, God Himself then spoke, declaring his new creation and assuring that these promises are faithful and true. We can count on them, because

God, the Beginning and the End, has made them. His living water is offered to all those who have emerged victorious through Christ in the struggle against sin.

Glory of God (21:22-27) — The Holy City needs no special building dedicated to God's presence, for God the Almighty and Christ the Lamb are the sanctuary. God's glory lights the city, making the less glorious light of the sun and moon unnecessary. God's children from every nation live in light and harmony, and no gates are ever shut, as night never descends. Only that which is holy and in accordance with God's will comes into the city; only those written in the "Lamb's book of life" enter.

One of the greatest promises I derive from these verses is that I am being and will be made new. I know, from a lifetime of effort, that I cannot make myself fit for heaven. I believe He can and will. I love the idea of living as myself without my flaws. I'll have to get reacquainted with myself, as well as with my loved brothers and sisters in Christ.

Presence of God (22:1-5) — Reminding us of Ezekiel's vision (Eze. 47) and Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well (John 4), the river of life symbolizes eternal life and salvation. In the dry Middle East, such an ever-flowing, abundant source of clear water was a powerfully attractive symbol. Reminding us of Genesis 3, the "tree of life" also symbolizes eternal life. It leaves are for healing the hurts of the nations. In this painful summer filled with news of war and terrorism, this promise rings with special music.

In heaven, we will serve God and see His face forever. God will yet use us as His servants. Serving God here makes us happy, and so it shall be there. We can look forward with joy to our true Homecoming, where at last we will meet the greatest of all, our loving Lord, and we shall never have to leave His presence.

Rhoda Royce is a member of First Church, Clinton.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Maintain Bible Study and Prayer

Daniel 9:1-3, 9-11, 16-23a

By Don Schuman

When was the last time you read a passage of Scripture that moved you immediately to the floor to pray to God? Well that is what we find happened to Daniel as he read the prophet Jeremiah. Throughout his life, the Scripture gave Daniel guidance for obedience. God's Word prompted Daniel to intercessory prayer and supplication. The Word motivated Daniel to petition God for mercy and grace. God rewarded Daniel with biblical insight.

1. Biblical Guidance (Daniel 9:1-3)

As Daniel studied the word of the Lord written through the prophet Jeremiah, he realized that the exile for the nation of Israel would not be permanent, but rather seventy years. God's

Word had guided him to a new insight regarding the covenant of God.

Our prayer should guide our Bible study and our Bible study should guide our prayer. Do we, after God leads us to that "just right" passage for our situation, turn immediately to the Lord in prayer? Or, upon given special insight in a verse, do we go to God to thank Him for revealing His truth to us? I hope all of us do. We should always thank God for His guidance provided in His Word. We should always pray that God would provide guidance as we study His Word.

2. Biblical Confession (Daniel 9:9-11)

A National Day of Prayer is not just a modern concept. Daniel held one in this ninth chapter. Prayer for nations, communities,



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and cities is found throughout the Bible. Abraham petitioned on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Moses prayed for the children of Israel as he led them. Paul prayed for Israel and the Church. We must pray for our nation, cities, and communities as well as the Lord's Church. Daniel has left us an excellent example of how to do just that. Daniel's prayer of repentance for the nation of Israel focused on acknowledging who God is, confessing the sins of the nation, and supplication on the nation's behalf.

3. Biblical Petition (Daniel 9:16-19)

You can detect the earnest pleading in Daniel in these verses, especially if you read them aloud. Here is a desperate cry of one falling on the mercy and grace of God. Oh, that we would practice more prayer like Daniel, confessing the sins of our country and interceding on her behalf. This is a far cry from the prosperity prayers that are

so much in vogue today. This type of prayer is foreign to many Christians. Thank God that He included such biblical petition in His Word!

Daniel's prayer was a pouring out of his heart to God. In response, God poured out His heart to Daniel. The Word of God is God pouring out His heart to us even today. We need to be willing to listen to Him obediently through His Word as fervently as we want Him to listen to us.

Daniel prayed for a change in the character of Israel. He had just read the promise for a change in circumstances for the people. We today should have such an intense desire for a change in our character that we disregard our circumstances. Sadly, too many are more interested in an improvement in circumstances than in development of character.

4. Biblical Insight (Daniel 9:20-23a)

I've heard the remark, "The world has yet to see what a man completely sold out to the Lord could do." Well, I believe Daniel was such a man. He began steadfast for the Lord in

his youth and remained just as steadfast in his later years. God used him as the wisest counselor and the best administrator for two empires. God, through Daniel, has given us inspiring examples of unconquerable faith as well as details of important eschatological events. The angel Gabriel even hails Daniel as "greatly beloved" (v. 23).

How did Daniel live such a life that has impacted the world far greater than the kings under whom he served? By studying the Word of God and praying. The old saying is still true — there's a vast difference between books that men make and the Book that makes men. Other books were given to us for information, but the Bible was given to us for transformation. I challenge you to be a mighty prayer warrior like Daniel. I challenge you to be a diligent Bible student like Daniel. Your community, this country, and this world need more faithful believers like Daniel.

Schuman is pastor of Hamilton Church, Ashland.

Mississippi College announces new degree program in dyslexia therapy

CLINTON, Ms. (Special) — Mississippi College (MC) is the first university in the state of Mississippi to provide the opportunity for teachers to earn a masters in dyslexia therapy degree — and one of only five colleges or universities in the United States to offer this degree.

The development of the new degree program, under the MC Department of Education and Dean Don Locke, received strong encouragement from MC trustee J.W. Fagan and the Mississippi Scottish Rite Masons, particularly Howard Kerce, Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the Scottish Rite Masons in Mississippi.

The MC degree program uses standards and protocols developed by the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children in Dallas, where Martha Sibley has been the dyslexia coordinator since 1988. These standards and protocols are the core requirements for membership in



Mississippi College

the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), of which MC graduates will be eligible for membership.

The Legislature of the State of Mississippi has designated funds to the State Department of Education to support districts that submit requests for grants to assist with dyslexia issues. Teachers desiring to

become dyslexia therapists can possibly be funded by their districts.

The first cohort of potential dyslexia therapists is currently enrolled and is expected to graduate in the spring of 2006. The program is being supported through the MC Center for Special Needs Studies, which is coordinated by Margaret Carmean, longtime MC professor of education.

For more information on the new degree program, contact Shirley Tipton, MC School of Education, P.O. Box 4009, Mississippi College, MS 39058. Telephone: (601) 925-3250. E-mail: tipton@mc.edu.

Mississippi College, based in Clinton, is one of three colleges in the state affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The others are Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain, and William Carey College in Hattiesburg.



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